

The Caleb Harrison House ("Mountain Foot")  
93 Northfield Road  
West Orange, Essex County, New Jersey

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Seymour Williams, F.A.I.A., District Officer  
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

The Caleb Harrison House ("Mountain Foot")  
93 Northfield Road  
West Orange, Essex County, New Jersey

Owner: Simeon Harrison Rollinson, same address

Dates of Erection: Brick mansion 1808; brownstone  
wing ca. 1828

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Caleb Harrison (1770-1854)

Present Condition: Original, with alterations to  
rear of the wing and its second  
floor

Number of Stories: Two and one-half, above cellar

Materials of Construction:

Foundation - brownstone ashlar

Exterior walls - brick for main house,  
brownstone for wing

Interior walls - lath and plaster on  
studding

Chimneys - brick, two built into inside  
of gable end walls and finished in  
"bridge" form tops

Roof - gable, wood shingled, with top  
deck metal covered

Historical Data:

Miss Phoebe Harrison Rollinson, who resides  
in this notable house, states that it was built in  
1808 by her great grandfather Caleb Harrison(a)

(a) Compare Henry Whittimore, The Founders and Builders  
of the Oranges, publ. 1896, p. 72 - "Caleb Harrison -  
built in 1808 the present brick house which stands near  
the entrance of the Northfield Road", West Orange, and  
Pierson's History of the Oranges to 1921, pp. 13-16,  
both subject to some correction. See also Wickes' History  
of the Oranges publ. 1892, p. 85.

END

BY HENRY G. CONRAD

The title has been traced to the last named and to his father Simeon Harrison in the public records as follows:

By a deed of 15 February 1796, the heirs of Caleb Crane of Orange Township\*, Essex County, conveyed a part of his farm there to Simeon Harrison<sup>5</sup> of the same place, for 3050 pounds, describing a large tract extending some 3500 feet in a southeast to northwest direction mostly along the southwest side of "the road leading up the mountain", and bounded south by "dark lane as it now runs to James Ogden's house", west by land of Isaac Smith, and east by that of Nathaniel Lindsley, failing to specify the acreage thereof, but including the "houses, # buildings, hereditaments", etc. These bounds of this tract do not appear to include all of the lot at the southeast end of which stands today the house here surveyed, but apparently do include the actual site of that house(b).

\*The name Orange was adopted in place of "Newark Mountains" at a meeting of inhabitants in 1780, and the region was set off from Newark Township as Orange Township in 1806. From it and from parts of Caldwell and Livingston Townships was created Fairmount Township in 1862, which name was changed to West Orange in 1863.

#Evidently the house (since demolished or rebuilt) which (says Miss Rollinson cited above) stood across Northfield Road from the house here surveyed, and in which this Simeon Harrison and wife Hannah (Crane) resided during the Revolution. At the time of his death in 1819, however, his homestead was on Valley Road, now Main Street at entrance to Llewellyn Park, as see note (c).

(b)This conveyance of the tract on Northfield Road to Simeon Harrison 1796, shows that Whittemore's statements (in reference a) that Simeon was born (1741) in the homestead thereon and that it had been purchased by his father Amos Harrison from the executors of Caleb Crane, are not the facts.

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This Simeon<sup>5</sup> Harrison born in 1741 was third child of Amos<sup>4</sup> and Hannah (Johnson) Harrison, grandson of that Samuel<sup>3</sup> and Jemima (Williams) Harrison who came from Newark about 1720 to "the Newark Mountains"\* and built there the house inscribed SH 1723 on Washington Street west of Day Street, in Orange, of which see photograph page 71 in Whittemore and in Pierson cited in note (a). The grandfather Samuel<sup>3</sup> died 15 September 1776 aged 93 years according to his gravestone inscription in the Presbyterian cemetery at southwest corner of Main and Scotland Streets in the present city of Orange (d). Simeon Harrison first abovesaid was born in 1741 and died 20 September 1819 aged 78 years, his gravestone being in the Episcopal cemetery next to the Presbyterian one abovesaid on Main Street in the same city (d). By his wife Hannah Crane, (1746-1839) a daughter of the Caleb Crane from whose estate he obtained the tract on Northfield Road in 1796 as cited above, Simeon<sup>5</sup> Harrison had issue: Caleb of whom further, Phebe (1774-1835) who married Noah Matthews, John (1776-1841) who died without issue, Hannah (1781-1848) who married John P. Bruen, and Sarah (1783-1841) who married Joseph Matthews(e).

(c) The will of John<sup>6</sup> Harrison of Orange, 1828, devised to his brother Caleb "the homestead farm situated and being in Orange, being the same whereon my father Simeon Harrison, deceased, formerly lived". Said Caleb Harrison devised by will 1849 to his three daughters "the old homestead farm devised to me by my late brother John Harrison", and one of them Hannah Whittingham, devised "the old homestead" on the west side of Valley Road, West Orange, by her will 1876. This homestead at No. 112 Main Street, (formerly Valley Road), West Orange, is still standing 1940.

(d) Wm. H. Shaw, Hist. of Essex and Hudson Counties, New Jersey, 2 vols. 1834, pp. 774 and 777, inscriptions from gravestones in Orange. Simeon Harrison was re-interred by his son Caleb from the Presbyterian to the Episcopal, says Miss Phoebe Rollinson.

(e) Pedigree of Harrison cited in (a) and corrected in (b)

Simeon<sup>5</sup> Harrison the purchaser of that Crane tract on Northfield Road in West Orange purchased in 1796 as abovesaid, had been living in the old house thereon during the Revolution, says family tradition. He moved to his homestead on Valley Road (c) in the same place and died there between 10 November 1818 and 24 September 1819, the dates of signing and proving his will in which he devised to his wife Hannah all his household goods, three cows, "as much house room as she may want for her use in the house where she now lives", and the annuity of \$100 in lieu of her claim to dower or thirds of the real estate. He devised to his daughters Phebe Matthews \$1000, Hannah Bruen the house and lot where she lives, and Sally Matthews \$1000; to his son Caleb<sup>6</sup> Harrison "the farm or plantation where he now lives", to his son John<sup>6</sup> Harrison "the farm or plantation\* where he lives or adjoining the lot where he now lives", and all the remainder of his lands, meadows, and real estate and movable property to the two sons equally, they to pay the debts and legacies above made.

Caleb<sup>6</sup> Harrison, born 17 February 1771, the elder son and devisee in 1818 of the farm on Northfield Road on which tract he had built in 1808 the brick main unit of the house here considered, lived there until his death between 3 January 1849 and 22 September 1854, the dates of signing and of proving his will, in which he devised to his wife Keturah, in lieu of her right of dower the annuity of \$200, to his three daughters Hannah, wife of the Rev. William R. Whittingham, Margaret, wife of Joel W. Condit, and Phebe Harrison, "the stone dwelling house# and lot situated nearly opposite my dwelling house", also "all the old Homestead farm devised to

\*Testator's homestead on Valley Road now Main Street. (See note c)

#Miss Rollinson, cited above, says this house was built by Caleb<sup>6</sup> Harrison for his son Simeon at the latter's marriage (1834), was not finished when the latter's wife died (1835), may have been built on foundations of the old Crane house mentioned in the deed of 1796 (see p. 2), and was never occupied by any of the Harrison family.

me by ..... my late brother John Harrison, deceased", the shop lot, a 30 acre mountain lot, two lots of salt meadow near the old Ferry in Newark, a six acre lot in Morris County, his share in a 4 acre salt meadow lot, "two Pews in the middle aisle of St. Mark's Church in Orange", six cows and all his bank stock, the whole to be equally divided among them. To his son Simeon Harrison he devised all the remainder of the estate (which remainder included testator's house here surveyed) he to pay the debt to the church and the annuity to the widow.

This Caleb<sup>6</sup> Harrison, the testator above-said, died in this house 10 September 1854 aged 84 years and having been received (with his family and several relatives) as a member of St. Mark's Church at its organization in 1825, was buried in the Episcopal cemetery on Main Street, in Orange (d). By his wife Keturah Crane, born 6 May 1769, who died 9 April 1855, a daughter of Isaac Crane, Caleb Harrison had issue, Mary 1793-1815; Phoebe died young; Hannah 1795-1885 wife of the Rev. William R. Whittingham (the first rector of St. Mark's above mentioned, later Bishop of Maryland); Margaret 1800-1865 wife of Joel W. Condit; Phoebe 2nd 1802-1892 unmarried; and Simeon of whom further.

Simeon<sup>7</sup> Harrison (2nd) was born in the paternal homestead (~~here considered~~) on 17 February 1804, died there 20 March 1872, and was buried in the Episcopal Cemetery on Main Street in Orange, (d) as had been his father and grandfather. He was educated in the village school of Orange and in Bloomfield Academy, and was elected in 1858 to the Assembly. His wife Abby Maria whom he married 26 February 1834, was born 28 April 1810 and died 26 May 1835, a daughter of Stephen Condit of Troy, New Jersey (a).

This Simeon<sup>7</sup> Harrison 2nd who inherited the house here considered from his father Caleb Harrison as above cited, died there as stated, intestate, leaving as only child and heir, Abby

Maria<sup>8</sup> Rollinson\*, and the administration upon his estate was granted to his son-in-law Samuel O. Rollinson on 19 April 1872. On 2 February 1897, Simeon H.<sup>9</sup> Rollinson was appointed administrator, and he dying on 13 February 1935, was succeeded by his son Simeon Harrison<sup>10</sup> Rollinson, Jr. in that capacity. Abby Maria<sup>8</sup>, only child and heir of Simeon<sup>7</sup> Harrison 2nd abovesaid, widow of Samuel Osborne Rollinson, had died 24 February 1892, devising to her son Simeon Harrison<sup>9</sup> Rollinson "my said dwelling house and the certain lot of land connected therewith, situate on the northwest side of Northfield Avenue in the said township of West Orange", and providing continuance of the use of a room and of all the furniture in the house by her Aunt Phebe Harrison in common with the other members of the family as a homestead until the youngest of the children, Simeon H., Phoebe H., Mary S., and William Rollinson, arrives at 21 years, this devise being made according to "the dying request of my late father".

By deed of 28 April 1933, Simeon H.<sup>9</sup> Rollinson, the son and devisee of the family homestead as above, with wife Ruth H., conveyed it to their son Simeon H.<sup>10</sup> Rollinson Jr., and he conveyed the same to them as tenants by the entirety by deed of even date. The widow Ruth H. Rollinson as surviving tenant conveyed the homestead to the son by her deed of 10 March 1936, all the parties being of West Orange and residing in the house then and at the time of our survey 1940.

\*Born 7 May 1835, died 24 February 1892 in this house, having married in St. Mark's Church, West Orange, 25 November 1869, Samuel Osborne Rollinson, born 20 December 1830 in New York City, who died 17 August 1891.

## Bibliography:

A search of title in Land and Probate records of Essex County by Joseph Pitocco, H.A.B.S. abstractor

Information written 28 March and 3 April 1940 by Miss Phoebe Harrison Rollinson, great granddaughter of Caleb Harrison the builder of the house, and referring to verbal statements of her Aunt Phoebe Harrison (1802-1892)

Lewis D. Cook  
Supervising Historian

Approved:

Seymour Williams  
SEYMOUR WILLIAMS, F.A.T.A.  
District Officer

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